

The Waiting Sky

By Lara Zielin

Chasing tornadoes verses living with an alcoholic mother are subjects that books are written about and this book has both! After Jane's drunken mother has a fender bender while driving Jane and her friend home, Jane McAllister is asked by her older brother to come take pictures for his crew that chases tornados in order to gather scientific information. Soon Jane finds herself traveling back and forth along tornado alley helping the crew gather data on tornadoes. Of course there is a rivalry crew on hand to add some intrigue to the story along with a couple of little romances. Written for 7th grade and up I found this an attention grabbing book. The reader is caught up in the adventure of tornadoes, personal lives of the crew along with coming to understand the situation of dealing with an alcoholic parent. This fast paced book would be an excellent choice for public or school libraries.

Pat Thompson, WSC

Chicken Scratches

By George Shannon

This book is a collection of poems written about chickens. Some chicken poetry is rather comical in this book of funny poems about a chicken's make-believe life. Many students will love these poems about funny make-believe chickens. Recommended for grades 1st through 3rd and appropriate for any library.

Lara Morrow

13 Words

By Lemony Snicket

Through this story a dog is working hard to cheer up a bird who is his friend. The bird is depressed but is given new hope when dog cheers him up a little. The illustrations are what will keep children's interest in this book as it is quite hard to follow for most readers. It does challenge young children and adult vocabulary, therefore, bringing teachable moments to individuals reading this book. Recommended for grades 3rd and 4th and appropriate for any library.

Lara Morrow

Miss Sally Ann and the Panther

By Bobbi Miller

This is a tall-tale about the woman of wonder, Miss Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind. This great tall-tale is about Davy Crockett's sweetheart who wrestles a mean-as-tarnation panther. This book contains great, colorful illustrations and is a lot like Steven Kellogg's tall tales. I have always enjoyed tall tales so I am biased about this book! This book is recommended for grades 3rd through 6th and appropriate for any library.

Kristy Wittler

Jacques and de Beanstalk

By Mike Artell

I enjoyed this spin-off on the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Done in poetic form, with a Cajun emphasis, it was a hoot. The pictures add so much to the story and it was great for story hour. Even my littlest got into the story. Recommended for grades K-5th and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

The Spider's Gift: A Ukrainian Christmas Story

By Eric A. Kimmel

This was such a nice book about a Ukrainian holiday and how the family deals with a financial crisis and still celebrates their special holiday. The artwork is fairly primitive but is done to symbolize what it might be like in that part of the world. It shows a very rural family, and narrates how the family can still celebrate Christmas without a lot of money. Because they show kindness to the baby spiders carried in with the Christmas tree, they are rewarded on Christmas Eve in a way that is heartwarming and very meaningful. After reading this tale you may believe in Christmas miracles. Recommended for grades K-4th and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

The 3 Little Dassies

By Jan Brett

All of us grew up with the three little pigs and the big bad wolf. But in Southern Africa, the Dassies must deal with eagles when they leave home. The storyteller – the Agama man – relates to the reader, explaining what the three Dassies are doing and what the eagle is doing to them. It is an enjoyable story with great pictures. The book is definitely Jan Brett, whom readers have loved for years. I think children will enjoy this story and the pictures. Recommended for grades Pre-3rd and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Fox Tails: Four Fables from Aesop

By Amy Lowry

This story contains great pictures! Follow along as the author puts a new spin on Aesop's Fables. Fox treats others shabbily. Read on as the penguin teams up with others he has treated badly and see how they get back at the unsuspecting fox. This is a very enjoyable book. Recommended for grades K-3rd and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Me and You

By Anthony Browne

This wasn't my cup of tea, it has pictures of Goldilocks becoming lost, wandering through slums and coming out into a nicer neighborhood where the bears live. It is almost a picture book. Being self-sufficient, Goldie goes in the strangers house and helps herself to the soup, chairs, and beds. The Bears come home and find her. Not being gracious, she jumps up and runs out of their home. I think I like the original better. Recommended for grades Pre-3rd and appropriate for any library.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

The Story of Little Red Riding Hood

By The Brothers Grimm

The pictures in this book are beautiful. Since the Brothers Grimm can be, shall we say, rather grim, I was concerned about how the story would go. The part where the wolf swallows Grandma and Red is a little grisly, and how the wood man retrieves them is not for the lighthearted. Other than that it is a nice little story. Today's children might enjoy the whole story. If you are looking for varieties, this epic might be just for you. This book is recommended for grades 1st-4th and appropriate for any library.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Forsythia and Me

By Vincent X. Kirsch

Chester and Forsythia are best friends. Forsythia is awe-inspiring to Chester because of her many exceptional talents which range from being a piano virtuoso, to acrobat, to portrait painter and live animal tamer. Chester's talents are much more modest, but when Forsythia becomes ill, he is able to charm and delight her with his simple abilities. This is a wonderful discovery for Chester who adores Forsythia all the more because of her acceptance. Recommended for ages 4-9 and appropriate for any library.

Latricia Olson

Wink: The Ninja Who Wanted to Nap

By J.C. Phillips

Wink performs as the star of the Lucky Dragon Circus. He is well-known as the Nimble Ninja. Normally, Wink enjoys being noticed but after performing in towns all over Japan, he just wants to go to his Grandfather's house and nap.

Unfortunately, Wink's fans won't leave him alone and he can't get any rest. Wink solves his problem by distracting and confusing his fans with his Ninja friends who are dressed like he is. Wink naps while his fans are led on a goose chase.

Kids ages 4-8 will delight in Wink's efforts to escape from his present fans. This book is appropriate for any library.

Latricia Olson

If You Give a Dog a Donut

By Laura Numeroff

This is yet another addition to the line of "If You Give..." books that children have loved for years. Who knew that if you give a dog a donut it will set off a chain of events leading to a game of baseball and kite flying? This book will most likely appeal to the pre-K through 1st grade group and is appropriate for any library.

Latricia Olson

Rumble Tum

By Stephanie True Peters

Rumble Tum is Beth's new kitten. Beth loves Rumble Tum with all her heart. She enjoys all aspects of caring for Rumble Tum and she plays with her and includes her in her daily activities. Rumble Tum grows to be the best pet ever. However, one day she escapes from Beth's care and runs out into a storm. Rumble Tum is lost and Beth despairs of ever finding her. Fortunately, Beth and her cat are reunited. The illustrations are gorgeous and serve to make the story seem more real. Children who read this book will love Rumble Tum as much as Beth does. Recommended for ages 4-9 and appropriate for any library.

Latricia Olson

Buddy

By M.H. Herlong

Tyrone has wanted a dog forever, but due to family expenses, they have no money for a dog. But one morning on the way to church, Tyrone's dad hits a dog with the car. They stop, the dog is alive but its back leg lies at an odd angle. The dog is very thin and rough looking. They pick the dog up and continue on to church, because they don't have any money to take the dog to the vet. The people of the church help raise the money. Tyrone names him Buddy and proclaims it was a sign that the dog is to be his. So begins the fun times with Buddy. But then Hurricane Katrina is approaching and dad says they have no room to take Buddy with them, so they put food and water in the upstairs bathroom and leave. What happens to Buddy, Tyrone and his family and the family home, blends to make a good reading experience for children third grade on up. I enjoyed this book and would recommend it to public and school libraries.

Marilyn Quance

WSC

Plant a Kiss

By Amy Krouse Rosenthal

This is a very simplistic book showing how a child planted a kiss and how it grew. Complete with lovely glitter plants that bloomed and grew; spreading to all of the little person's friends in all kinds of weather. This book has cute pictures. This book is recommended for grades Kindergarten through 3rd and appropriate for any library.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

All About Grandmas

By Roni Schotter

This is a really cute book about all the different types of grandmas. Illustrations really add to the story. There is even a chart in the front of all the different words that mean grandma in many languages. Every one of us has a grandma that would fit one of these types. This is an enjoyable book for grades Kindergarten through 4th and is appropriate for any library.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Brown Rabbit in the City

By Natalie Russell

What a sweet little book about the little brown bunny that goes to the city to see his friend the white rabbit. They rush around to a café, an art gallery, and other places. Little Bunny gets so tired that he wants to sit down and what he wishes for the most is to have an opportunity to visit with the white rabbit. Read the book to see how it turns out. This book is recommended for Preschool through 3rd and appropriate for any library.

The Camping Trip that Changed America

By Barb Rosenstock

I love books that pertain to U.S. history and this book was very enjoyable. It is about two separate men that grew up in two different areas of the U.S. One is married, has lots of children and is famous and rich. The other was born to immigrant farmers and is not married. He hikes the American wilderness and becomes a world famous naturalist and protector of wild places. Theodore Roosevelt loved reading books by John Muir. Muir claimed that forests would disappear without the help from the government. He asked Muir to take him camping, and so they went. After spending several days in the wilderness together, Roosevelt realized that what Muir said was true and he went back to Washington and enacted legislation that would create National parks and reserves that we still enjoy today. Recommended for Kindergarten through 5th grade and appropriate for any library.

Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Hands Around the Library

By Susan L. Roth and Karen Leggett Abouraya

Egypt was in turmoil and chaos reigned. Would the Alexandria Library be destroyed? People that loved books (students, library workers, and demonstrators from around the world) formed a chain holding hands to protect the beautiful glass building and the treasures it held. The people's determination held and it allowed the library to stand as it was, as people knew it. This book is recommended for grades 2nd through 5th and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Al Pha's Bet

By Amy Krouse Rosenthal

A man called Al Pha lived many centuries ago. All kinds of things were being invented, like fire and wheels. Al Pha wanted to invent something too. Twenty six letters were invented, but they weren't in order so they couldn't be really useful. If in order, people could write letters, they could write poetry, and books. So Al Pha sat down and put them in order so they could be used. The illustrations are interesting and I think especially for younger grades, this would be sort of neat. This book is recommended for grades Kindergarten through 4th and appropriate for any library.
Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Winterling

By Sarah Prineas

Fer has always felt more akin to the forest than her home. She saves a creature that looks like a boy but is really something else. He invites her through the Way, a magical realm. She comes back to her Grandmother but realizes she must go back and help and find out more about the mother and father she never knew. When she returns through the Way, she realizes everything is out of balance and that a powerful huntress named Mor is responsible. The world is also dying on her Grandmother's side of the Way. Using her healing powers and the help of some of the creatures through the Way, she is able to discover her parents' past and defeat Mor. This book is recommended for grades 3-6 and any library might find this a good book to add. I found this fantasy-adventure a little slow at the beginning but as I progressed in the book it became more interesting. If students will read past the first few chapters and they like magic or fantasy, I think they will enjoy this. Might be a little more interesting to girls but there is enough adventure that boys should enjoy it. Easy to read and understand the characters.
Deb Daehnke

Snow in Summer

By Jane Yolen

Seven-year-old Summer loses both her mom and her newborn brother to complications at birth. Now it is almost as if she has lost her father as well. He no longer works in the garden he has always loved and only sings at Summer's mom's grave. Now Summer has a new stepmom and a father who is more distant than ever. It takes several years but Summer finally realizes she is in danger and must find some way to save both her father and herself. The story shows promise at the beginning and then just starts to drag and you wonder if anything will happen. Suddenly it speeds up and the story is done. The promise of a good modern day fairytale never really materializes. This book is truly a waste of time in every aspect. Recommended for grades 5-7 and appropriate for any library.

Diane Limoges

The Doll Shop Downstairs

By Yona Zeldis McDonough

At the beginning of World War I, New York City is a melting pot of immigrants from all over the world. One of those families is Anna's, composed of her mom, dad and two sisters. The family lives upstairs above a doll repair shop where Anna's father expertly repairs porcelain and bisque dolls. Although poor, the family makes a living in the midst of one of New York's most crowded immigrant neighborhoods. Anna and her sisters play with dolls that are brought in and left in the store for long periods of time. But as World War I escalates, her father is unable to get any doll parts for repairs since most of them come from Germany. They fall on hard times until they fall upon the idea to make their own dolls, which becomes a hit, especially with the owner of one of the largest department stores in New York. Throughout these events, Anna loses the doll she has been playing with to the original owner. But in a moment of self-confidence, Anna sends a letter to the doll's owner and the doll is returned to Anna to keep. This book is recommended for grades 2-4 and any library collection. This book has a few special features such as a glossary, World War I timeline, and the author's note about the history of the Madame Alexander doll. This is a small glimpse of what life was like in one of the immigrant neighborhoods of New York at the start of World War I. The parents are hardworking and the children are very respectful of their parents, a nice glimpse to give young children today. The author creates a little bit of angst as to what will happen to the dolls but just enough to keep the reader interested. Any little girl who likes dolls should enjoy this book. It's nice to read something that is gentle, respectful and gives a glimpse of the past.

Deb Daehnke

Summer and the City

By Candace Bushnell

Carrie is spending the summer at the “New School” of writing in New York before going to Brown in the fall. After losing her purse and getting evicted from her apartment, Carrie starts to move with the flow of the city and is beginning to enjoy her time there. She hooks up with the playwright Bernard Singer and is sure she has found true love. Living with Samantha and partying with her and several of her fellow classmates, Carrie finds she has little time for writing. Now she’s going to have a reading. IF all goes well, maybe she can just stay in New York and forget about attending college. The sequel to “The Carrie Diaries,” this is not a well-written, smooth moving book. At times the storyline is excellent. Then it lags for several chapters before picking up and is once again worth reading. There are parts of the book that you can skim without ever losing the point of the story. Recommended for grades 9 and up and appropriate for any library.

Diane Limoges

Beauty Queens

By Libba Bray

The book begins when a plane, carrying Teen Queen contestants, crashes on a remote volcanic island. The island is also where Mo Mo B. Cha Cha, Lady Bird Hope, and the Corporation were hiding out. The cast of the runaway pirate ship from the reality T.V. show “Captain’s Bodacious IV: Badder and More Bodaciouser” land on the island and love blooms. This book was hard to read. The story line was so far-fetched –the teen queens worrying about keeping their pageant skills up after the plane crash instead of worrying about survival. One of the teen queens had a tray lodged in her head, but there is no concern about that. It seemed that the author tried to include so many issues (black candidates, a transgender contestant, a lesbian relationship, protected sex) that the story lost believability. The story had footnotes which seemed unnecessary. The story was also interrupted repeatedly to tell more information about the teen queens and the Corporation. This information was not read by this reader. It seemed to stop the story. This was not one that this reader would recommend. The girls seem shallow and the story line hard to believe. With so much going on, it was hard to read.

Kathy Muller

Playground

By 50 Cent (Curtis Jackson III) with Laura Moser

The book is a story of Butterball, a somewhat overweight boy at J. Watkins Junior High School. Butterball has an attitude and attacks a former friend on the playground in an attempt to be accepted and recognized by the kids at school. This desire to be accepted leads to bad choices which find him being a bully to others. This book was an excellent book, for it is told by the bully. Many stories are about those who are bullied. This helped to portray some of the reasons kids do bully others. The story is told as Butterball goes for sessions with Liz, the Psychologist. He has to go see her or he will be expelled from school. The best part of this book is observing how the psychologist works with Butterball and comes to realize the boy's creative talents. She helps him to prepare an application for a magnet school where music and creative arts are taught. This story is the story of the early life of rapper 50 Cent, a former bully. Illustrations include black and grey pencil drawings. Recommended for grades 4-9 and appropriate for any type of library.

Kathy Muller

Walls Within Walls

By Maureen Sherry

Nine-year-old Brid, twelve-year-old CJ, and six-year-old Patrick move from Brooklyn to a Manhattan apartment when their father becomes rich. Purely by accident they discover a mystery about a family inheritance that is hidden in their apartment. The former owner, the deceased Mr. Post, loved puzzles. He hid the family fortune somewhere within the apartment. His daughter and many others have been searching for it for years to no avail. Now the discovery of an overdue library book offers the first clue to an exciting mystery. Though they try to follow the clues on their own they soon find themselves recruiting Eloise Munn (really, the daughter Eloise Post) and Ray, the elevator man to help them in their search. It is surprisingly plausible that these young children are able to work through a mystery that adults have not been able to solve. This is a real page-turner that young readers will love. Recommended for grades 4-6 and appropriate for any library.

Diane Limoges